

The Constitution.

Entered as second class matter at the Atlanta postoffice, December 11, 1879.
ATLANTA, GA., JANUARY 11, 1880.

Is it the empire, or only a new field for the reconstruction process that appears in the sunrise state? One is as bad as the other.

Three American states have military dictators—Peru, Mexico and Bolivia. Peru and Bolivia got their two the course of a foreign war, and the Maine rule came in to meet the exigencies of General Blaine's political campaign. The people of the South American states had some excuse for accepting dictators, but the people of Maine have none at all.

This central system is indefinitely postponed in this country. The New York produce exchange attempted to force its introduction throughout the country, and then they abandoned the effort by a vote of 7 to 1. The Boston board of trade was the only other body that adopted the system, and it will be of course have to turn it loose. It will take a strong pull, and a pull altogether to do away with the old system of measurements. The central system is altogether the best, but even the best have a rough road to travel.

The successor of Senator Whyte, Mr. A. P. Gorman, is only 41 years old. He has, however, been in public life, or at least in politics, nearly twenty years. He was appointed a page of the senate by Stephen A. Douglas. He was not a postmaster of the senate. President Johnson appointed him collector of internal revenue, an office that he held until Grant's accession to power. He has since been in all branches of the Maryland legislature—the speaker, and at present he is serving out a second term in the upper house.

He will not take seat in the United States senate until March, 1881. He supplants an excellent man, but his friends think that he will be an able and efficient senator, and that his past career is a guarantee of a brilliant future.

The bill that is now before the house of representatives to give eight dollars a month to the survivors of the Mexican, Creek, Seminole and Black Hawk wars is identical with that which passed the last house after a hot political debate, in which Jefferson Davis's name prominently figured. One provision of the bill proposes to repeal the section of the revised statutes which declares that no bill on account of pensions shall be paid to those who in any manner voluntarily engaged in or aided or abetted the rebellion against the authority of the United States. It is thought that the bill will become a law before this session is ended. It certainly should. The sum needed to meet its terms would hardly be noticed among the greater sums annually disbursed to those who fought on the federal side in the late war.

"The New Bible." The work of the British and American scholars who have been engaged about ten years in revising King James's version of the Holy Scriptures, is drawing to a close. The new testament will be published this year, and the old testament in the course of two years more.

The version is of course not in any sense. Its style and idiom and vocabulary are very much those of the version now in use; and were it not for the fact that the new version will present the text in paragraphs instead of verses and chapters, each paragraph containing a distinct thought, the average reader could not tell the new from the old version. Marginal references will, however, permit the reader to keep to the old arrangement of chapters and verses.

The new version contains of course some innovations. Noah's name, for example, will be spelled alike in all places, and the new version will be adapted to the present state of the English language and biblical learning. Some of the best scholars of the two countries are engaged in the work of revision, and it is generally expected that they will give us not only a version that can be more easily understood by all readers, but one that is thorough and conservative in all respects. Their work will be greeted by a shower of criticism—a fact that the revisers will understand—and we may therefore be sure that a version that will stand the fire.

The situation in Maine. The statement that Major-General Chamberlain of the Maine militia has assumed the duties of governor needs confirmation. If he has done so, he has acted on the plan of leaders in Spanish America; for there is no clause in the constitution of the state to justify any such step. The constitution says: "When ever the office of governor shall become vacant by death, resignation, removal from office, or otherwise, the president of the senate shall exercise the office of governor until another governor shall be qualified." Under this plain provision Maine can have no other governor during this interregnum than President J. D. Lawson, or Lamson, of Freedom, Wald County. He is said to be a benevolent looking man of sixty years, with a snow white beard. He is both cautious and resolute. He starts slowly but actually after he does start he will not stop until he will let General Chamberlain or any militia officer usurp his rights and duties.

There is in fact no reason why the house should not proceed to certify two names to the senate for the chief executive office; for there is a quorum in the house beyond all reasonable doubt. As to a quorum, the constitution simply declares that "each house shall be the judge of the elections and qualifications of its own members, and a majority shall constitute a quorum to do business." A majority of what? It does not say whether it should be a majority of a full house, or of those who hold certificates. The constitution of Maine and of the United States are alike indefinite on this point; they read alike; and all through the war, when many states were unrepresented, the republicans held and largely acted on the theory that a quorum was a majority of those who were actually members. On this theory a vast amount of legislation was enacted even after the close of the war. Shall Hamlin and Blaine now be allowed to set up the contrary theory because it best suits their purpose? There are 14 vacancies in the Maine house, and 69 is therefore a quorum. The fusionists have this number in attendance and a few to spare; and they should proceed to send the senate two names from which body can designate the next governor of the state. No attention should be paid to the vapors of the revolutionary rascals who rally Senator Blaine's house a congenial rallying and consultation point.

The Republican Politicians of Maine.

We have followed up the different phases of the situation in Maine with great care and considerable elaboration, and the readers of The Constitution have been kept informed with almost painful exactness not only of the progress of events but of the causes, direct and remote, that have conspired to bring them about. Heretofore, however, we have not alluded to the fact that these causes and these events have opened up a new vein of republican humor. Indeed, in the interests of American dignity and statesmanship we have endeavored to suppress this phase of the affair. We have warned our young men to tenderly guard the honor of the cause, and our head-liners, by special request, have refrained from treating it with the coarseness and brusqueness with which it is wont to deal with ordinary events and episodes. In short, we have exerted all our power and influence in an effort to lay only the serious aspects of the Maine difficulty before our readers; but now that the matter has grown too large for concealment, we feel that we should be doing injustice to that large and influential portion of the public which depends upon The Constitution for information as well as mental recreation to longer attempt to ignore the new and original vein of republican humor which the plucky policy of the Maine democrats has been the means of developing.

The case of Mr. Blaine will serve to illustrate the remarkable phenomena that have from time to time cropped out in our dispatches. This able man, it will be remembered, started out as an enthusiastic campaigner. Not even the members of his own family suspected that he was going to be a politician. He conducted the campaign with a native vigor and ferocity all his own. He denounced the democrats wherever he found them. He abused the greenbackers in out-of-the-way places, and accused the steers that drew Uncle Solon Chase's chariot of rebellion and conspiracy. He shook the bloody shirt in the faces of innocent women and children, and tore off great slices of the blue ether to feed his stentorian lungs. He perspired. He convulsed voters by roaring through two dollars and a half a head to become living exemplars of the patriotism of the republican party. He made speeches. He wrote letters. He shook his venomous eyelashes at the milky-way. And when the alleged returns of the election were sent in, he deliberately climbed upon the back-slash and crowed like a rooster. This was act one.

When it was discovered that many of the records of the election were not in accordance with the forms prescribed in the constitution and the laws, Mr. Blaine advised the governor and his council to ignore the law and count the fatally defective returns. Then he insisted. And finally he commanded. Mr. Blaine's intentions were no doubt good, but his influence was less powerful than he thought. His advice, his insistence and his commands made no impression when the voice of the people spoke through the democratic governor. For once, the voice and presence of Mr. Blaine made no adequate impression. His desires were of less importance than the constitution and the laws, and the authorities went on rejecting the fatally defective records. This was act two.

As a matter of course, this was treason—vile, violent, flagrant, rebellious treason—night treason—treason without even a night-dress on. It was not only treason; it was treason of a most villainous ferocious kind. Then Mr. Blaine grew very indignant, and he endeavored to distribute his indignation all over the state. He set the machinery in motion and manufactured mass-meetings in various towns and supplied them with indignant resolutions. He made an indignant letter. He placed a tract of land in the hands of several devout preachers, and these worthy men forthwith preached indignant sermons. They breathed war and spoke in favor of bloodshed, and for a time the very heavens took on a sanguinary hue. Mr. Blaine even got the news agencies confused, so that it was almost impossible to form a definite idea as to the exact state of affairs in Maine. Outside of the state, succumbing to the confusion of matters, fell to and helped themselves to Mr. Blaine's large surplus of indignation and joined him in denouncing honesty and a conscientious discharge of duty as treason. Indeed, it may be said that Mr. Blaine's only victory was the ease with which he excited the sympathy of certain of the Maine electors, not printed in Maine. This was act three.

But all this time, while Mr. Blaine was playing the part of an indignant patriot in public and impressing the people that he was cut out for a sort of left-handed Brutus, he was in reality forswearing the fortunes of the republican party by means of bribery. His agents were approaching certain democrats with money and endeavoring to obtain from them their written resignations. This, it strikes us, is true humor, but the climax of the comedy comes when the democrats, after pretending to fall victims to republican bribery, come out and expose the whole thing. The result is surprising, indeed, that Mr. Blaine drops down right in the face of the curtain and has a fit of five hours duration, and the fit is the proper end of act four and of the tragedy.

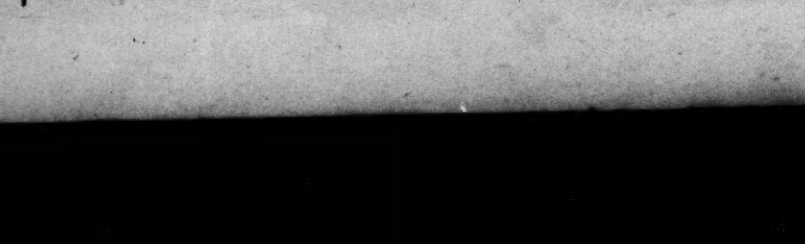
After this we needn't go to the books for humor. Really, Mr. Blaine and his efficient assistants should take to the road. It would be money in his pocket. With a second-hand, circus tent, a government brand of brandy and a few dollar-keeper, he could create a furore in all parts of the country. We can imagine the eloquence with which Billy would advertise his attractions: "Walk right this way, ladies and gentlemen! The 'greatest moral exhibition of the age!' Here, for the insignificant sum of 'fifty-five cents, you have the panorama of the Maine election, the 'twenty-five cents to see the great troupe'—to offend the taste of the most fastidious. Between the acts, Signor Blaine, the acknowledged strongman of the republican party, will do the presidential sunstroke business in full view of the audience. He will afterwards have his only original five-hour fit, as advertised on the bills. Walk right in, ladies and gentlemen! Get your tickets at the door. The world-renowned Hannebald Hammerlin will represent a winter-cure by appearing without his overcoat. Remember—only twenty-five cents! The great and only Eugene Hanebald will contract the seven years' itch in possession of the spectators. Only twenty-five cents to see the 'greatest troupe of trained politicians, high-toned and slight-of-hand performers!' Only five cents to see these exhibitions in one, and its rates can be made more

perfectly bold and high-headed manner can Mr. Blaine and his gang hope to get their money back. If the Maine senate hopes to succeed, he must make his bid and his submission to the people as to such.

The Railroad Combination. After a careful survey of the situation we are satisfied that the contract of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis railway with the Central railroad, attended with the concurrence of the Western and Atlantic railroad, must be of great benefit to Atlanta, to Savannah, and to the state at large.

This is the day of combinations in everything, and more especially in railroads than in anything else. Through the timidity or small jealousy of our railroad operators, through petty local interests that apparently conflict, and through an absurd fear of monopoly and an equally absurd opposition to it, the south has never had a great through line to the ocean. Demagogues have misled the people and controlled the legislature, while capital has employed itself in building up dismantled lines, and meeting local needs. The consequence is that the vast produce of the west has poured through the northern states, enriching the markets they passed through, and building up northern cities and strengthening northern ports. The ships that left these ports, carrying the exports brought from the west along the northern trunk-lines, returned loaded with immigrants and imports that were carried by the returning trains to the west, and the cities along the route. The result is that the northern and western towns have become cities, and thus crossroads have become complete towns, while the south has been populated with thrifty foreigners. The south has grown slowly, and without help from outside—importing all her goods through roundabout routes and from distant cities—her own ports and her harbors empty—getting only a trickle here and there from the great current of immigrants that poured into the west. There can be no real immigration without direct trade.

It has been impossible, so we have said, for the south to control western trade simply because it has never had a man with brain and nerve enough to organize a continuous line. We have had a number of local lines, disconnected, with various policies and usually antagonistic—one of them able to dictate a settled policy. At last we have this. The trade between the Central and the South Atlantic, the Savannah, Atlanta and New York, and Havana. We may reasonably hope that in a short time we shall see this line competing with the great lines of the north and west, draining the wealth of the west through our state to Savannah, and thence distributing it by various lines of steamers all over the world from a southern port that will compete with Baltimore and New York. Then we may hope to see our customers, instead of being scattered, will be concentrated in one place, and the tariff will be lowered. The arrangement made by this Cole-Brown combination will result in doubling, quadrupling, the business of the route. And this in turn to a vast lowering of the local as well as the through rates. Once lower the locals on the system of roads in Georgia controlled by this combination, and they must be lowered everywhere. The result will be a lowering of the tariff, and the tariff will be lowered. The arrangement made by this Cole-Brown combination will result in doubling, quadrupling, the business of the route. And this in turn to a vast lowering of the local as well as the through rates. Once lower the locals on the system of roads in Georgia controlled by this combination, and they must be lowered everywhere. The result will be a lowering of the tariff, and the tariff will be lowered. The arrangement made by this Cole-Brown combination will result in doubling, quadrupling, the business of the route. And this in turn to a vast lowering of the local as well as the through rates. 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A dark, textured horizontal band, possibly a book cover or binding edge. The top portion is a light gray with a fine, grainy texture. A sharp, dark horizontal line separates this from the bottom portion, which is a solid, deep black. The overall appearance is that of a close-up of a book's spine or a similar material.